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A NATIONAL STUDY OF

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING READERSHIP AND PROSPECT STATUS

Newspaper Advertising Bureau, Inc. 485 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017

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Field work and Tabulations by Response Analysis Corporation, Princeton, N.J.

Analysis and Report by Newspaper Advertising Bureau Inc.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose:

This research was conducted to obtain benchmark measures of classified advertising readership for both weekday and Sunday/weekend newspapers. The study differs from earlier Newspaper Advertising Bureau research on classified readership, in that adults who reported reading "yesterday's" newspaper were taken through the classified pages of that paper and asked about individual classified headings. In addition, the study was designed to obtain a national measure of awareness of classified advertising outside the regular classified section. For the three most important classifications of advertising (Real Estate, Employment and Automotive) respondents were asked to position themselves according to three levels of prospect status.

Sample Design and Selection:

The research design for this study called for personal, in-home interviews with a national probability sample of adults aged eighteen or older. The sampling procedure used was roughly equivalent to dividing the United States into small geographic segments--each consisting of a cluster of about 20 housing units --and making a selection of 100 such clusters for the survey.

The following steps were involved in the selection:

.The approximately 3,000 counties and independent cities in the United States were grouped into 1,140 first stage units.

- The 1,140 first stage units were next divided into 103 groups or strata. Each stratum consisted of first stage units as much alike as possible in terms of geographic region, community type and socio-economic characteristics.
- One primary sampling unit was selected from each of the 103 strata. These selected primary sampling units were the primary areas for the survey.
- Within primary areas, specific segments of housing units were selected and assigned to interviews.

Probability methods were used at each stage of sample selection. Interviewers had no choice in the selection of households for the survey. The selection of respondents within these households was also determined by a random selection process. Only one respondent was interviewed in each household.

Classification of Respondents by Readership Pattern

Interviewers carried copies of daily/Sunday newspapers having as least 10% penetration in their assigned location and used these as exhibits to screen respondents for readership classification. Those respondents who reported reading a designated daily or Sunday newspaper the previous day were administered the "Reader" questionnaire. The remaining respondents were classified as "non-readers", even though they might have read some newspaper other than those designated.

Each interviewer was assigned one Monday interview (to secure a minimum of 400 interviews referring to Sunday papers) and two other days of the week to conduct interviews. To insure random selection of the five weekday issues of the newspapers, cards numbered from one to five to correspond to each day of the week were arranged into five different interviewing patterns.

Field Results:

Interviews were completed with 1,273 designated respondents, or 67% of those selected by the random process described in the preceding section.

Persistent efforts were made to find designated respondents at home and to urge cooperation from those who were reluctant to participate. Interviewers were instructed to make an original visit and up to three callbacks, as necessary, to complete the interview at each sample household. Callbacks were required at different times of the day and evening, and on different days of the week.

Approximately 100 interviewers participated in the field phase of the study. A systematic sample of approximately 15 percent of interviews was verified by telephone or mail. The verification procedure revealed no evidence of questionable work.

Summary of Field Experience

Total housing units assigned	2,050
Vacant, non-existent	140
Occupied	1,910
Completed Interviews	1,273
Total Noninterviews[1)]	637

Completion Rate $\frac{1,273}{1,910} = 66.6\%$

1) Noninterview experience was as follows: 375 refusals; 85 not home after at least four visits; 51 respondent not available during field period: and 126 "other" (e.g., illness, language problems, etc.).

Areas of Responsibility

The basic research design and questionnaire for this research were developed by Newspaper Advertising Bureau. Sampling, field work and data processing were supervised by Response Analysis Corporation of Princeton, New Jersey, to the specifications of Newspaper Advertising Bureau. Data were analyzed and interpreted by Newspaper Advertising Bureau.

Study Dates

Interviewing for the research was conducted from the period of mid-April to early June 1979.

Additional details on sampling, interviewer training and supervision, data processing and weighting are available on request from Newspaper Advertising Bureau.

HIGHLIGHTS

(Findings from personal in-home interviews with a national probability sample sample of 1,273 adults)

On Classified Advertising Readership

Yesterday's newspaper readers were shown the classified headings in the papers they read. This "recognition" approach indicates that:

On an average weekday--	53% of all newspaper readers (58 million adults) see some classified advertising
On an average weekend--	54% of all those reading Sunday or weekend newspapers see classified advertising

Whether they are looking at weekday or Sunday editions, those who read any classified advertising generally see ads under two different headings.

The four best read classifications: General Merchandise/Household goods
Employment
Real Estate
Automotive

The percentage of newspaper readers reading an individual classification shows no significant differences between weekday and Sunday/weekend editions.

Classified ads outside the regular section may help to boost readership for the regular section as well.

Whether they were regular newspaper readers or not, all respondents were asked to recall classified ads they had read during the past week. This "recall" method generally understates readership but indicates that:

In an average week-- About six out of ten of all adults, (58%) see classified advertising.

One third of the total population (33%) become interested in one or more ads.

And 18% follow up or intend to follow up one or more ads.

Classified readership is highest among:

the young, the well educated and the affluent.

Prospect Status and Involvement with Classified:

Prime prospects for goods and services seek out classified advertising, become interested in it and follow it up. In a single week:

Real Estate ads are read by--	74% of those looking for a house to buy, and 70% of all prime prospects for rentals
Employment ads are read by--	68% of those actively seeking white collar jobs 48% of those looking for blue collar jobs
Automotive ads are read by--	53% of those actively looking for a car.

Interest in following up ads is also high among prime prospects. Some examples:

Real Estate ads--	32% of all who are actively looking to buy 22% of all actively looking to rent
Employment ads--	41% of all white-collar job seekers 25% of all blue-collar job seekers
Automotive ads--	14% of prime prospects for cars.

But readership, interest and follow-up are not limited to those who say they are actively looking. Browsing in the classified section can mean a change in prospect status. Example:

7% of those who say they are not "actively looking" but would consider taking a job express interest in following up employment ads, as well as

2% of those claiming "no interest" in a job

Other Findings:

Members of the public are classified advertisers as well as readers. About one out of four adults (24%) report placing classified advertising within the past year.

Private party advertising occurs in almost all classifications but is heavily concentrated in "General Merchandise", "Used Cars" and "Rentals."

In comparison to those placing smaller ads, private party advertisers placing ads of four lines or more report a heavier response rate (20+ inquiries per ad).

Classified advertising gets high performance ratings from the public:

Statement	Percent Favorable
"A good place to advertise things you want to sell"	79%
"Makes it easy to find what you want"	75%
"A good way to look for a house or apartment"	73%
"Helpful"	71%

DETAILED FINDINGS

I. ONE DAY'S AND ONE WEEK'S READERSHIP OF CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

How Many People Do Classified Ads Reach in a Single Day?

In this national probability survey of 1,273 adults, respondents who reported reading one of "yesterday's" newspaper issues carried by the interviewer, were taken through the classified sections and asked whether they had seen any of the ads under individual headings. This approach to measuring classified readership indicates that 53% of weekday issue readers and 54% of Sunday/weekend readers look at one or more categories of classified advertising. On the average, those who see any read ads under two different headings.

When measurements obtained from a current large-sample survey of adult newspaper readership[1)] are applied to the percentages found in this research, they yield estimates of about 57 1/2 million classified readers on an average Sunday or weekend and more then 58 million on an average weekday.

On any given day, each of the four major classifications (Employment, Real Estate, Automotive and General Merchandise) is read by about one fourth to one fifth of all newspaper readers.

1) The 1979 Study of Media and Markets, Vol. M-1, Simmons Market Research Bureau, New York, 1979.

ONE-DAY READERSHIP OF CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

	Percent of Newspaper Readers on:	
	One Weekday[1)]	One Sunday[1)]
Read any classified ad (net)	53%	54%
Employment	25%	19%
Real estate	23%	21%
Automotive	19%	18%
General merchandise, household goods	25%	26%
Recreational, sports equipment	9%	12%
Services	9%	8%
Other	9%	7%
Average number of categories read	(2.3)	(2.1)
Unweighted base: Yesterday's readers = 100%	(495)	(228)

Question: I am going to show you some of the kinds of classified ads in yesterday's paper (the weekend paper). Please tell me if you saw any of the ads under the headings I point out.

1) None of the differences in the percentage reading a given category on weekday versus Sunday is statistically significant.

A Problem in Measurement:
How Many People Read Classified in a Week?

As described in the preceding section, "yesterday's" newspaper readers were shown and asked about classified headings appearing in the papers they read. However, logistics, budget limitations and problems of respondent fatigue and cooperation make it impossible to take people through all of the daily and Sunday newspapers they have read in the past week. The necessity of shifting from a "recognition" to a "recall" measure definitely affects the results obtained, since recall makes greater demands on the individual respondent's memory.

Although other Newspaper Advertising Bureau research[1)] indicates that the great majority of "daily" and "Sunday/weekend" newspaper readers are in fact the same people, findings from the current research might appear to show that readership of classified advertising in Sunday or weekend editions is 13% lower among "weekday" readers than among "Sunday/weekend" readers. Similarly, classified readership over five weekdays appears to be 12% lower for "Sunday/weekend" readers than for "weekday" readers. Most of this disparity reflects the difference between "recall" and "recognition" measures of readership; only a small effect should be attributable to the failure of "weekday" readers to read "Sunday" editions, or vice versa. In other words, figures on classified readership over the past seven days, discussed in the following section, would be higher if it were possible to show respondents all of the newspapers read in the past week.

1) See "How the Public Gets Its News", Newspaper Advertising Bureau, October, 1977.

Another possible approach to measuring the cumulative readership of classified advertising over five weekdays would be to interview the same sample of respondents on two different days, each time asking them about "yesterday's" readership of classified. This procedure would provide a better estimate of the turnover among classified readers and thereby permit the computation of readership over three weekdays, four weekdays, etc. However, budget limitations ruled out the use of this approach. Earlier research [1] using the rigorous two-interview method and the recognition approach suggests that advertising reaching more than 50% of the readers of a single issue would cume to 87% of the readers over five weekday editions.

1) For example, see "Yardstick of Accumulative Newspaper Ad Readership", Newspaper Advertising Bureau.

"RECALL" AND "RECOGNITION" MEASURES OF CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING READERSHIP

	Yesterday's Newspaper Readers: Weekday Respondents	Yesterday's Newspaper Readers: Sunday Respondents	Yesterday's Non-Readers[1)]
Read one or more classified ads in one weekday issue	53% (recognition)	(not asked)	(not asked)
Cumulative classified readership over five weekdays	66% (recognition + recall)	54% (recall)	34% (recall)
Read one or more classified ads in one Sunday issue	41% (recall)	54% (recognition)	16% (recall)
Unweighted base: Total respondents = 100%	(495)	(228)	(550)

Questions: When you were looking at a weekday issue of the daily newspaper this past week (aside from yesterday), which of these kinds of classified ads did you look at, if any? When you were looking at the Sunday or weekend paper, which of these kinds of classified ads did you read or look at, if any?

1) "Non-reader" group includes yesterday readers who read a daily or Sunday newspaper other than those "designated" (that is, newspapers having at least 10% penetration in the surveyed county). Readers of non-designated newspapers represent 9% of the "non-reader" group, or 48 respondents.

Readership, Involvement and Action
Generated by One Week of Classified Advertising

This survey indicates that in a week of seven days, nearly six out of ten adults (58%) look at classified advertising. Moreover, the average adult who sees any classified advertising at all during this period looks at ads under 2.7 different headings.

The past week's picture of public involvement with classified advertising reveals the winnowing process characteristic of all advertising: Only a portion of those who read ads are actively interested in them, and only a portion of those who are interested contact the advertiser. In the same way, only a portion of those who get in touch with the advertiser actually take employment, buy the advertised house, etc., but demonstrating this point lay outside the scope of the current survey.

Since classified readership frequently involves a purposeful search rather than casual exposure, the conversion rate for this form of advertising is impressive. Over seven days, about a third (33%) of all adults in the nation become interested in one or more classified ads, and 18% follow up, or express the intention of following up, one or more.

Among individual classifications, readership, interest and follow-up is highest for general merchandise, employment and real estate, each of which is read by about three out of ten adults. These three are closely followed by the automotive classification, read by about one out of four.

READERSHIP, INTEREST IN AND FOLLOW-UP OF CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING IN PAST WEEK

	Percent of Total Adults:		
	Reading	Interested	Following Up[1]
Any classified ad (net)	58%	33%	18%
Employment	28%	10%	5%
Real estate	28	10	5
Automotive	24	10	5
General merchandise, household goods	30	13	7
Recreational, sports equipment	14	6	3
Services	15	6	3
All other	20	6	1
Average number of categories	(2.7)	(1.8)	(1.5)
Base: Total respondents = 100%	(1,273)		

Question: Did you see any ads for _____ (TYPE) that you yourself might be interested in? Have you followed up on any of these ads, either by phoning or going to check on it personally? Do you intend to follow up on any of these ads?

1) Includes "followed up" and "intend to follow up".

What Kinds of People Read Classified?

Like all other forms of advertising, classified has different degrees of appeal for different population segments, reflecting their individual levels of need for the kinds of goods and services advertised.

Overall, men and women show similar levels of classified readership (59% and 57%, respectively) but significantly more men (31%) than women (17%) read the automotive classification. Beyond the age of 65, both overall readership and readership of individual classifications drops sharply, primarily because older adults are less likely to feel the need for a job, a different residence or a car.

Overall readership is significantly higher for those with college backgrounds (66%) than for people with less than a high school education; the same is true for individual classified headings. In part this finding reflects the fact that people under 50 years of age, who tend to be highest in classified readership, are also more likely than older adults to have college educations.

The proportion reading any classified ad rises with family income, from 50% for those under $10,000, to 70% for those with incomes of $25,000 or more. However, the readership of individual classifications tends to peak in the middle-income range, between $15,000 and $25,000.

READERSHIP OF CLASSIFIED ADS IN PAST WEEK
(by Demographics)

	Percent of Total Adults, Reading:				
	Any Ad	Employ-ment	Real Estate	Auto-motive	General Merchandise
Total adults	58%	28%	28%	24%	30%
By Sex:					
Male	59%	27%	26%	31%	29%
Female	57	29	29	17	31
By Age:					
18-24 years	61%	37%	30%	31%	27%
25-34 years	67	31	35	29	37
35-49 years	65	30	29	25	30
50-64 years	60	28	26	23	35
65 years or older	30	11	17	10	16
By Education:					
Some high school or less	49%	22%	22%	20%	26%
High school graduate	59	29	27	25	30
Some college or more	66	31	35	26	34
By Family Income:					
Under $10,000	50%	27%	27%	21%	28%
$10,000-$14,999	60	30	29	24	33
$15,000-$19,999	63	33	30	31	36
$20,000-$24,999	68	32	36	31	36
$25,000 & over	70	24	32	24	26

See Appendix, Base Table I, for unweighted bases.

Among Newspaper Readers, Who Reads the Classified?

As discussed in the preceding section, 58% of the adult population reads some classified advertising in the course of a week. However, among newspaper readers--that is, those who had the opportunity to read classified--two thirds, or 68%, actually did so.

Findings on the percentage of various population segments reading classified are obviously affected by levels of newspaper readership in these groups. For example, newspaper reading is significantly higher among those with college backgrounds than for people with less than a high school education. This means that, taken as a group, people at the lower educational level have less opportunity to read the classified section.

A better idea of the intrinsic interest of classified advertising for various demographic segments can be gained by looking at classified readership among newspaper readers. This shows that, given the opportunity, those with less than a high school education are about as likely to read classified as those with college backgrounds are. However, those at the lower educational level do not appear to be as interested in certain classifications, such as Real Estate.

This analysis also points up the high level of interest in classified among younger adults. Among newspaper readers under 25 years of age, 45% read Employment advertising in the past week. Among those between 25 and 34 years old, 41% read Real Estate advertising.

PAST WEEK'S CLASSIFIED READERSHIP AMONG NEWSPAPER READERS
(by Demographics)

	Percent of Newspaper Readers Reading:				
	Any Ad	Employ-ment	Real Estate	Auto-motive	General Merchandise
Total newspaper readers	68%	33%	33%	28%	35%
By Sex:					
Male	69%	31%	30%	36%	34%
Female	68%	34%	35%	20%	37%
By Age:					
18-24 years	75%	45%	37%	38%	34%
25-34 years	78%	37%	41%	34%	43%
35-49 years	74%	34%	33%	28%	33%
50-64 years	68%	32%	30%	26%	40%
65 years or older	38%	14%	22%	13%	21%
By Education:					
Some high school or less	68%	31%	30%	27%	36%
High school graduate	68%	34%	31%	29%	35%
Some college or more	70%	33%	37%	28%	35%
By Family Income:					
Under $10,000	66%	36%	36%	28%	38%
$10,000-$14,999	73%	37%	35%	29%	40%
$15,000-$19,999	74%	39%	35%	37%	43%
$20,000-$24,999	74%	35%	39%	34%	39%
$25,000 & over	73%	26%	33%	25%	27%

Do Classified Ads Outside the Regular Section Boost Readership?

Among yesterday's newspaper readers, about one out of five received newspapers with blocks or pages of classified advertising outside the regular section. Nearly two thirds (66%) of these readers looked at some classified advertising in the issue, as compared with 51% of the readers with newspapers having only regular classified sections.

Those who were exposed to "outside" classified ads also appear to be more likely to look at the regular classified section, although the two reader groups do not differ significantly in this respect. However, newspaper formats which disperse classified advertising throughout the paper may serve to heighten awareness of the kinds of goods and services advertised in the regular section.

YESTERDAY'S READERSHIP OF CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

	Readers Having Newspapers With Outside Ads	All Other Readers
Read any classified ad (net)[1)]	66%	51%
In regular section	59%	51%
Outside regular section	33%	NA
Unweighted base: Yesterday's Newspaper readers = 100%	(129)	(594)

1) Difference in the proportion reading any classified ad is significant beyond the .01 level (chi square = 10.04)

Classified Ads Outside the Regular Section Also Stimulate Involvement

Although it might be assumed that classified advertising outside the regular section is more likely to attract "casual" readers and therefore less likely to stimulate interest in comparison to the regular classified section, "outside" ads actually produce about the same level of "interested" responses as those in the regular section do.

Among those readers exposed to newspapers with outside classified advertising, 38% indicated that they were aware of these ads, 33% read one or more, and 15% expressed interest in some of this classified advertising.

The table on the following page details awareness, readership and interest for six types of classified advertising found outside the regular section. No general conclusions have been drawn about responses to these six kinds of advertising because the base number of readers for a given category is small. (This is because a given newspaper may carry only one or two kinds of classified advertising outside the regular section, and the categories involved can vary from one paper to another.) However, this detail has been shown because it indicates the kinds of ads to be found outside the regular section and the relative frequency with which they appear.

AWARENESS, READERSHIP AND INTEREST IN CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING OUTSIDE REGULAR CLASSIFIED SECTION

	Aware of Ads	Read One or More	Interest in One or More
Any classified advertising outside regular section (net)	38%	33%	15%
Automotive	16%	14%	6%
Real Estate	13	9	5
General merchandise	9	5	3
Services	8	6	3
Recreational/sports equipment	5	2	2
Career, professional opportunities	3	-	-
Other	4	4	1

Base: Readers exposed to newspapers with classified ads outside regular section = 100% (129)

Question: The _____(NEWSPAPER NAME) also carries some classified advertising in other places, outside the classified section....What about the classified ads on this page, under the heading_____? Did you happen to notice this group of ads? Did you look at any of these ads for _____(TYPE)? Did you see any ads for _____(TYPE) that you yourself might be interested in?

II. PROSPECT STATUS AND INVOLVEMENT WITH CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

How Many People Are Looking for a Job, a Residence or a Car?

In order to demonstrate the purposeful character of much classified ad readership, this survey asked people about their personal level of interest in a job, a house or apartment, and a car. Findings from this part of the survey confirm the marketing truism that at any given point in time the active "market" for a given product or service is relatively thin. However, the fairly small percentages of people who say they are actively looking for a job, house, apartment or car represent large numbers when projected to the total adult population of the United States:

Active Prospects:	Percent	Projected U.S. Total [1]
For a job	7%	11 1/4 million
For a car	7%	11 million
To buy a house/apartment	5%	7 million
To rent a house/apartment	5%	8 million

In addition to these "prime" prospects, there is a larger group of "secondary" prospects who say that while they are not "actively looking", they "would consider" moving, changing jobs or buying a car if an unusual opportunity presented itself. The remainder of the population, representing more than seven out of ten adults for each of the categories discussed here, say that they have "no interest".

1) Population base used for projection is 155,794,000 adults. Apparent differences in figures reflect percentage rounding. (From "The 1979 Study of Media and Markets", Simmons Market Research Bureau)

Although the proportion of prime and secondary prospects in the total population might be expected to remain fairly constant over time, it should be pointed out that a given individual's prospect status can be highly fluid: People move in and out of the market at varying rates. For example, earlier research[1)] with a sample of recent home buyers found that 30% had decided on the home they bought in less than two weeks from the time when they first started looking, whereas 7% spent more than a year in their search.

In the context of advertising strategy, the "secondary prospect" group is extremely important. Many in this group can be expected to move into the "prime prospect" group at some point, and exposure to relevant advertising may trigger the change in prospect status. For example, in comparison to those with less than a high school education, people with college backgrounds are somewhat less likely to say that they are "actively looking" for a job. However, about twice as many of the college-educated say that they "would change jobs or take a job if the right one came along." Some of these people could probably be described as "not quite actively looking" but very open to career oportunities.

The "no interest" segment is probably the most stable of the three prospect groups. For instance, 96% of the respondents 65 years of age or older report that they have no interest in a job; 95% say that they have no interest in moving. There is little reason to believe that their prospect status in these two areas is likely to change. However, some younger adults could be expected to move directly from "no interest" to "prime prospect" in a very short time.

1) See "An Eight-Market Study of Recent Home Buyers", Newspaper Advertising Bureau, September, 1978.

Predictably, age exerts a particularly strong influence on prospect status: The "hottest" prospects for jobs, real estate and automobiles tend to be under thirty-five years of age. Among those under twenty-five years of age, 23% say they are actively looking for a job; 19% are primary prospects for a rented house or apartment. Interest in buying a home peaks between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-four; 12% of this age group say they are actively looking to buy a home.

JOB PROSPECT STATUS
(by Demographics)

	Actively Looking	Would Consider	No Interest
Total Respondents	7%	22%	71%
By Sex:			
Males	7%	22%	71%
Females	8	22	70
By Age:			
18-24 years	23%	34%	43%
25-34 years	7	36	57
35-49 years	5	22	73
50-64 years	4	14	81
65 years or older	*	4	96
By Education:			
Some high school or less	8%	16%	76%
High school graduate	8	21	71
Some college or more	5	30	65
By Family Income:			
Under $10,000	15%	20%	65%
$10,000-$14,999	2	25	73
$15,000-$19,999	4	28	69
$20,000-$24,999	5	21	72
$25,000 & over	6	23	70

Question: Which statement (on this card) best describes your own personal interest in finding a job?

I am actively looking for a (new) job.
I am not actively looking but would change jobs (take a job) if the right one came along.
I have absolutely no interest in changing job (finding a job).

See Appendix, Base Table I, for unweighted bases.

* Less than 0.5%

(Some rows do not add to 100% because "not sure" and "no answer" have been omitted. These two categories represent less than 0.5% of all responses.)

REAL ESTATE PROSPECT STATUS
(by Demographics)

	Actively Looking: To Buy	To Rent	Would Consider Moving	No Interest
Total Respondents	5%	5%	13%	74%
By Sex:				
Males	4%	4%	13%	76%
Females	5	6	13	73
By Age:				
18-24 years	4%	19%	22%	48%
25-34 years	12	3	19	61
35-49 years	4	3	13	77
50-64 years	1	3	9	86
65 years or older	1	1	3	95
By Education:				
Some high school or less	3%	6%	9%	80%
High school graduate	5	4	13	75
Some college or more	5	5	16	69
By Family Income:				
Under $10,000	3%	11%	12%	72%
$10,000-$14,999	5	1	15	77
$15,000-$19,999	5	5	15	73
$20,000-$24,999	6	5	12	75
$25,000 & over	7	2	18	70

See Appendix, Base Table I, for unweighted bases.

Question: Which statement best describes your own interest in a new home or apartment?

I am actively looking for a home to buy.
I am actively looking for a rented home or apartment.
I am not looking but would consider moving if a good opportunity came along.
I have absolutely no interest in moving.

(Rows do not add to 100% because "other" and "not sure" have been omitted. These two categories represent 3% of all responses.)

AUTOMOTIVE PROSPECT STATUS
(by Demographics)

	Actively Looking To Buy	Would Consider Buying	No Interest
Total Adults	7%	20%	73%
By Sex:			
Male	7%	22%	71%
Female	7	18	74
By Age:			
18-24 years	11%	32%	56%
25-34 years	11	25	63
35-49 years	8	20	72
50-64 years	4	15	80
65 years or older	3	5	92
By Education:			
Some high school or less	3%	17%	79%
High school graduate	8	19	73
Some college or more	10	23	67
By Family Income:			
Under $10,000	6%	15%	77%
$10,000-$14,999	5	19	76
$15,000-$19,999	10	22	68
$20,000-$24,999	8	28	64
$25,000 & over	11	22	68

See Appendix, Base Table I, for unweighted bases.

Question: Which statement on this card best describes your own interest in buying a car right now?

I am actively looking for a car (another car).
I am not looking but would consider a car (another car) if a good buy came along.
I have absolutely no interest in a car (another car).

(Some rows do not add to 100% because "not sure" and "no answer" have been omitted. These two categories represent less than 1% of all responses.)

How Does Prospect Status Affect Involvement with Classified?

Special tabulations on readership, interest and follow-up for three major types of classified advertising (Employment, Real Estate and Automotive) show a consistent pattern: The level of involvement is highest for prime prospects and lowest for the "no interest" group. For each of these three classifications, the difference in readership among the three prospect groups is significant beyond the .001 level. The most extreme example is the Real Estate category, which in the past week was read by 74% of those actively looking to buy and by 70% of those actively looking to rent, but by only 20% of those professing "no interest".

This finding may appear to be no more than "common sense", but it should be pointed out that even highly significant correlations cannot prove causality. That is, it cannot be said that all active prospects become involved with classified because they are prospects, or that none of those claiming "no interest" will read or act upon classified ads.

The response to classified advertising may sometimes be affected by human susceptibility to "impulse", even in areas involving major life decisions. A small percentage of those who reportedly have no interest in moving, finding a job or buying a car nevertheless become interested in classified advertising or even in "following up". This suggests that browsing in the classified section may occasionally produce dramatic changes in prospect status.[1)]

1) It should be pointed out that the questions used to establish prospect status do not cover all contingencies. For example, some people with no interest in moving may be real estate investors.

READERSHIP, INTEREST AND FOLLOW-UP FOR THREE MAJOR CLASSIFICATIONS

(by Prospect Status)

EMPLOYMENT:

	Actively Looking	Would Consider	No Interest
Read employment ads in past week[1)]	56%	46%	19%
Interested in one or more ads	37%	15%	6%
Followed up or intend to follow up one or more	31%	7%	2%
Unweighted bases:	(85)	(277)	(909)

REAL ESTATE:

	Actively Looking to Buy	Actively Looking To Rent	Would Consider Moving	No Interest
Read real estate ads in past week[1)]	74%	70%	40%	20%
Interested in one or more ads	43%	35%	18%	5%
Followed up or intend to follow up one or more	32%	22%	5%	2%
Unweighted bases:	(58)	(58)	(174)	(946)

AUTOMOTIVE:

	Actively Looking	Would Consider	No Interest
Read automotive ads in past week[1)]	53%	44%	15%
Interested in one or more ads	25%	21%	5%
Followed up or intend to follow up one or more	14%	12%	2%
Unweighted bases:	(77)	(240)	(949)

1) For each of these three classifications, differences in readership among the three prospect groups are significant beyond the .001 level.
(chi square = 109.73 (Employment);154.41 (Real Estate); and 131.29 (Automotive))

A Special Case: The Dual Nature of the Job Market

Certain job openings are almost invariably advertised through classified, but in other cases employers may depend on alternative means of reaching applicants. In general, positions requiring formal education are most often advertised through classified. The scarcity of some highly trained professional and technical workers has even led to the widespread use of special display classified sections, often called "Career Oportunities". On the other hand, some plant workers can find employment only through unions.

A special tabulation differentiating those actively looking for professional, technical, clerical and sales positions from all other active job seekers shows that the "white collar" group is more likely to use employment classified. Two thirds (68%) of these job seekers read employment classified within the course of a week, as compared with 48% of those seeking blue collar jobs. Figures on interest and follow-up show similar differences.

PAST WEEK'S INVOLVEMENT WITH EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFIED
(Actively looking, by type of work sought)

	White Collar	Blue Collar
Read one or more ads[1)]	68%	48%
Interested in one or more	45%	32%
Follow-up on one or more	41%	25%
Unweighted Bases:	(36)	(49)

1) The probability that the difference in readership could occur by chance is about one in ten (chi square = 2.64)

III. PRIVATE PARTY ADVERTISING AND ATTITUDES TOWARD CLASSIFIED

People Place as Well as Read Classified Advertising

Although newspaper industry figures indicate that most classified advertising is placed by companies rather than by private parties, the public nevertheless recognizes that classified is a "person-to-person" advertising medium. About one out of four adults (24%) in this national probability sample report placing some classified advertising within the past year.

Among those placing classified advertising, the type placed by the largest proportion was "General Merchandise, Household Goods". More than four out of ten private party advertisers (43%) report use of this classification.[1] Although private party advertisers referred to the placement of ads in more than a dozen different classifications, the only other types mentioned by more than 10% of those placing ads were "Used Cars" (28%) and "Rentals" (11%).

1) It might be noted that "General Mercandise, Household Goods" is also the classification highest in readership, interest and follow-up. (See Chapter I of this report.)

PLACEMENT OF CLASSIFIED ADS IN PAST YEAR

	Percent of: Total Respondents	Those Placing Classified Ads
Placed one or more classified ads (net)	24%	100%[1]
General merchandise, household goods	10%	43%
Used cars	7	28
Rentals	3	11
Recreational, sports equip't.	2	6
Homes for sale	1	6
Home-related services	1	5
Help wanted	1	5
Boats, sailboats	1	4
Personal notices	1	4
Trucks	1	3
Other services	1	3
Legal notices	*	1
Other	1	3
Unweighted bases	(1,273)	(308)

Question: Apart from looking at classified ads, have you or anyone else in your household placed a classified ad in a daily paper within the past year or so? (IF YES) What kind or kinds of classified ads have you placed within the past year or so?

* Less than 0.5%

1) Column totals more than 100% because some respondents placed ads in more than one classification.

Larger Space Classified Advertising Pays Off

All those who identified themselves as private party advertisers were asked how many responses they had received from the ads they placed. In another question they were also asked to recall the number of lines in their ad.

A special tabulation crossing the number of responses received by the number of lines in the ad shows a relationship which is significant beyond the .01 level: One fourth (26%) of the classified ads of four lines or more generated twenty or more responses, as compared with only 13% of the ads smaller than this.

The higher attention value of larger space ads may account for part of this differences, but it is also possible that readers have more confidence in acting on larger space ads because they provide more complete information.

Private party advertisers were also asked about the number of days their advertising ran and about their use of weekday editions and Sunday editions, but these two factors showed no significant correlation with the number of responses received. Logically, this outcome seems improbable: If a classified ad generates any responses at all, it would appear that two or three insertions should generate more replies than a single insertion. In view of the considerable demand made on respondents' memories of ads placed "within the past year or so", it may be that those placing ads on two or more days tend to recall the rate at which responses were received on a single day, rather than the total number received over all insertions.

NUMBER OF RESPONSES TO CLASSIFIED ADS PLACED
(by Number of Lines in Ad)

Number of Responses:	Number of Lines in Ad: One or Two	Three	Four or More
Less than five	44%	40%	34%
Five to ten	28	32	26
Eleven to twenty	18	14	14
More than twenty[1)]	10	14	26
Unweighted base: Classified ads placed = 100%	(72)	(147)	(80)

Questions: Do you recall about how many responses you got to your ad for _____(TYPE)? Was it less than five, between five and ten, between eleven and twenty, or more than twenty? Do you recall how many lines of type there were in your ad for _____(TYPE)?

1) Between classified ads of four lines or more and all smaller ads, the difference in the proportion attracting twenty or more responses is significant beyond the .01 level (chi square = 7.7536).

How Does the Public Feel About Classified Advertising?

In order to obtain some reading on public attitudes toward classified advertising, we asked respondents in the survey to rate classified on seven attributes, using a five-point scale ranging from "Extremely Good" (5) to "Extremely Poor" (1).

Four of the seven classified attributes asked about attracted favorable ratings[1] from more than 70% of all respondents answering. Almost eight out of ten (79%) rated the classified as "a good place to advertise things you want to sell," and 75% accepted classified as an advertising medium that "makes it easy to find what you want."

The only statement producing favorable ratings from less than half of those responding was "helping you save money". Responses to this particular point may have been influenced by timing, since the survey as conducted during a highly inflationary period.

Given the generally high level of these classified ratings, some implicit dissatisfaction was also reflected in the finding that only half (50%) of the sample gave a favorable rating to "gives details you want to know". This would certainly suggest that very brief one-or two-line ads may leave some readers with the feeling that they have not been given enough information to evaluate or act upon.

1) For the sake of brevity, "5" ratings plus "4" ratings have been designated "favorable".

ATTITUDE RATINGS ON CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

	Extremely Good				Extremely Poor
	5	4	3	2	1
"A good place to advertise things you want to sell"	50%	29%	16%	4%	1%
"Makes it easy to find what you want"	35	40	20	4	1
"A good way to look for a house or apartment"	37	36	18	6	3
"Helpful"	33	38	24	3	2
"A good way to look for a job"	32	24	25	12	7
"Gives details you want to know"	20	30	32	13	5
"Helping you save money"	19	23	36	13	9

Base: Respondents answering = 100%[1)]

Question: Using this scale from on to five, with five meaning "extremely good" and one meaning "extremely poor" how would you rate classified advertising in the newspaper on _____?

1) To simplify presentation, "not sure" and "no answer" have been excluded from base. Unweighted bases for individual ratings range from 1,063 to 1,162 respondents.

APPENDIX

BASE TABLE I

	Unweighted Base
Total adult respondents	1,273
By Sex:	
Male	571
Female	702
By Age:	
18 - 24 years	176
25 - 34 years	286
35 - 49 years	282
50 - 64 years	289
65 years or older	235
By Education:	
Some high school or less	399
High school graduate	460
Some college or more	408
By Family Income:	
Under $10,000	406
$10,000 - $14,999	185
$15,000 - $19,999	174
$20,000 - $24,999	135
$25,000 & over	196

METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The following tables are provided for the reader who is interested in obtaining a quick estimate either of the stability of a given percentage or of the significance of the difference between two percentages.

Confidence Intervals for a Given Percentage
(at the 95% confidence level)

N (Base for %)	Reported Percentage: 10 or 90%	20 or 80%	30 or 70%	40 or 60%	50%
500	2.6	3.5	4.0	4.3	4.4
250	3.7	5.0	5.7	6.1	6.2
200	4.2	5.5	6.3	6.8	6.9
150	4.8	6.4	7.3	7.8	8.0
100	5.9	7.8	9.0	9.6	9.8
50	8.3	11.1	12.7	13.6	13.9
25	11.8	15.7	18.0	19.2	19.6

Example: If a report shows that 20% of all respondents (when N = 500) answer in a particular way, the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the true value is 20% + or - 3.5%, that is, that the range 16.5% - 23.5% contains the true value.

Significance of Differences Between Percentages
(95% confidence level)

Average of the Bases of Percentages Being Compared	Average of Reported Percentages: 10 or 90%	20 or 30%	30 or 70%	40 or 60%	50%
500	3.7	4.9	5.7	6.1	6.2
250	5.2	7.1	8.1	8.6	8.8
200	5.9	7.8	8.9	9.6	9.8
150	6.8	9.1	10.3	11.0	11.3
100	8.3	11.0	12.7	13.6	13.9
50	11.7	15.7	18.0	19.2	19.7
25	16.7	22.2	25.5	27.2	27.7

Example: A report shows that 33% of all respondents from 30 to 39 years of age use a certain product and that only 27% of all respondents in the 40-to-49 age group use that product. Could this difference be due to chance?

In this example assume an average base of 500 for the represented percentages. The average of the percentages (33 + 27) equals 30% and the difference between the percentages is 6%.2

Since 6% is greater than 5.7 (the figure in the table for this base and percentage) the chances are about 95 out of 100 that the product is used more by the 30-39 age group.

The table values are based on an assumption of simple random sampling. The figures may be too large if a stratified sampling technique was used and probably are too small if a cluster sampling technique was utilized. (For formulas used, see McNemar, Psychological Statistics, pages 54, 60.) The second table should be used with extreme caution if the bases being averaged are very different.